

**Testimony in support of House Bill No. 6087 – An Act Authorizing the
University of Connecticut to receive and treat sewage from the Town of
Mansfield**

House Committee on the Environment Public Hearing

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Thank you Mr/Ms. Chairman for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 6087, an act that would authorize the University of Connecticut to receive and treat sewage from the Town of Mansfield.

The Town of Mansfield is served mainly by septic systems with a few exceptions in areas where the University of Connecticut and the Town of Windham WPCA provide wastewater service. Generally, wastewater connections are provided in areas of high civic or commercial use. One of the areas that is currently served by septic systems is what is known as the Four Corners – a 500 acre site near the intersection of State Route 195 and State Route 44 in northern Mansfield. Four Corners is one of the main gateways to the community and the University of Connecticut and includes commercial (gas station, drug store, etc.), residential, and mobile home park uses. For the last several years, Four Corners has had documented water contamination and wastewater disposal problems. There have been at least twenty-five instances of septic systems failures –both residential and commercial. This has become a health and environmental issue that needs to be addressed. At the urging of the CT Department of Environmental Protection, the Town has conducted a Facilities Plan (completed in 2008) to determine how best to address the wastewater disposal problems. The Facilities Plan concluded that the Four Corners area be tied into the University's wastewater system. This additional flow will be beneficial to the University's plant by stabilizing the plant's workings in the summer.

The Town has begun design of a sewage collection system, and in the fall of 2008, a 9-person citizen advisory committee was appointed by the Mansfield Town Council to facilitate the project and interact with the affected property owners in the area. The committee has met several times and will hold a meeting with affected owners at the end of March.

A public sewer system will remove the potential septic failure and costly repairs associated with short life expectancy, and eliminate surface and ground water contamination from existing septic systems. In addition to the health issues that access to the University's wastewater system would address, it would also allow for future sustainable economic development and redevelopment in this area. The net tax base would increase and additional goods and services would be available in this main entryway to the community. The Four Corners area is designated in the Mansfield Plan of Conservation and Development as an area for public water and sewer, and can support both commercial and mixed-use development.

I encourage your support of House Bill No. 6087, and would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.